



## MEETING SUMMARY

### November 18, 2011

A regular *public meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, November 18, 2011, at Children's Specialized Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m. by Warren Moore, Acting Chair, who presided.

#### ATTENDANCE – *Attached*

#### WELCOME/ACTING CHAIR REPORT – Warren Moore

1. Mr. Moore reported on the informal orientation session for new members held earlier in the morning. He expressed the Council's gratitude for Governor Christie's appointment of *eleven new members*, which brought the Council to its full complement in several years:
  - Rachel Badalament, Towaco – parent
  - Tia Dix, Medford -- parent
  - Michele Tyler, Westhampton – parent
  - Rosemary Browne – Department of Children & Families, Mental Health
  - Catherine Colucci, MA, OTR – Personnel Preparation
  - Lisa Della Vecchia, Ed.D – Department of Education, Head Start Collaboration Or Head Start Association/Program
  - Thomas Lind, M.D.-- Department of Human Services: (1) Medicaid Agency and (2) Child Care Agencies
  - Gloria Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services – lead agency
  - Michele Safrin – Department of Children & Families, Foster Care
  - Danielle Anderson Thomas – Department of Education, Office of Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children & Youth

Unable to attend was Jaime Martin, parent. Vacancy still exists for a legislative representative.
2. Mr. Moore *welcomed all attendees*, including those at the off-premise sites in Hamilton and Mountainside. At his request, SICC members and 29 public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.
3. In behalf of the Council, Mr. Moore expressed deep appreciation to *Carola d'Emery*, a service provider who served with distinction on the Council for eleven years. Ms. d'Emery responded with gratitude for her years serving children with special needs through the SICC.

She expressed her concerns about the changing environment of early intervention services and urged the Council to be aware of, and act on, these disturbing trends.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the *September 23, 2011 meeting* were unanimously approved as distributed – upon motion by Joseph Holahan, seconded by Kimberley Peto and carried.

## **NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES**

Gloria Rodriguez, Assistant Commissioner of Health; Karen Melzer, CSPD Coordinator

1. The four-day *Federal verification visit* in October of the U.S. Department of Education, Special Education Programs (OSEP) was very positive and complimentary, with no compliance issues identified as of the visit. When the final report is received (within 90 days), Ms. Rodriguez will bring to the Council the final results of the visit.
2. Members were urged to read the *County Performance Report 2009-2010* (distributed in advance/attached to file copy) and email questions to Ms. Rodriguez, who will review and bring answers to the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. Members were urged to attend the next *Part C Steering Committee meeting* on January 18<sup>th</sup> (emailed in advance/attached to file copy), which will review the status on NJEIS FFY 2010 Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators and discuss system activities accomplished July 2010 through June 2011. This will assist in the preparation of the APR due to OSEP on February 1, 2012.
4. Distributed/discussed were *Family Cost Participation Reports 11/15/11* (attached to file copy): (a) by statement date, (b) suspensions by month delinquent letter generated, (c) by month child exited EI, (d) by month child exited EI with FPL.
5. Distributed/attached to file copy were *Federal Part C Regulations* totaling 300+ pages. Terry Harrison and Alvina Seto are reviewing the regulations, which contain substantive changes to Part C. Changes that effect the SICC will be given to them in a comparison report reflecting “previous” and “now” regulations.
6. The *American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) funds* have been spent and liquidated, except for Covansys, which is gathering requirements for the web enhancement of the Central Management Office (CMO). This work will be completed and paid out by the December 31, 2011 deadline. ARRA funds have also been used to support the “results” topic that is addressing the child outcome for social emotional development. Activities include the purchase and training on the Ages and Stages (ASQ) 3 and ASQ social emotional in addition to other social emotional resources for providers and families.
7. Alvina Seto, *Procedural Safeguards Coordinator*, distributed/commented on several aspects of the activity report since the Council’s last meeting (attached to file copy).
8. Updating the *SICC website* is in process, including member profiles. Profiles of new members will be included as soon as available.

## **UPDATE FROM WORK GROUPS/ORIENTATION SESSION**

Because of tentative agenda as the result of eleven new members, the Incoming and Outgoing Communication Work Groups did not have reports.

It was agreed during the informal Orientation Session that, with the addition of 11 new members, the current working structure of the Council would not prove effective. Discussion elicited the following:

- Current work groups were too large to be effective.
- The entire committee system needed review and restructuring.
- The previous committee structure (4 smaller committees) and strategic plans should be emailed to members for review/feedback.
- Chairs of the strategic plans should report their current status; items still pending.
- Early Bird meetings (9:30 a.m.) the mornings of public meetings were preferred over a separate day/time for committee meetings.
- The Council should be looking at national practices and trends. Ms. Colucci, who has been working in this area, volunteered to make a synopsis of states with which she is familiar to share with the Council.
- Invite someone from the Early Learning Council to present at a future Council meeting; how to integrate with all families and children.
- New members would review the Handbook contents and get back to Terrie Goeke with questions.

Members were asked to review these materials in advance of the January 27th Early Bird Meeting, where feedback will be discussed and decisions made concerning how the Council can best function. New members, especially, were urged to submit new ideas or issues they see impacting the system.

## **REIC UPDATE**

While the REICs had no formal report:

- Patti Ciccone, Executive Director of Northeast REIC, shared the success of their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Casino Night, with 190 attendees raising \$27,000 for their special needs fund which supports community children with special needs selected by their Board.
- Jennifer Buzby, Executive Director of Southern New Jersey REIC, reported they are relocating their headquarters to a larger facility in January.

**OLD BUSINESS** – There was none.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Denise Murray (30 years in early intervention; 8 years on the Council, 4 as vice chair), expressed deep *concern about the trends* she is experiencing in the New Jersey Early Intervention System (EIS) and their impact on the quality of services provided to children and their families (attached). There was strong support for Ms. Murray's comments, as other Council members expressed similar concerns. Ms. Murray's comments will subsequently be reviewed/discussed at future meetings, as the Council reorganizes its structure and moves forward to assist the Lead Agency in its efforts to provide the most effective and efficient EIS within sound fiscal controls.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. *Cynthia Newman, Executive Director, Mid-Jersey Cares* ... Endorsed the comments of Ms. Murray (above).
2. *David Holmes, interim Executive Director of ABCD/Early Intervention Providers Association (EIPA)* ...(a) Supported the comments of Ms. Murray and Ms. Newman; was critical of the requirement for providers to submit a “Supervision Plan” with little direction; suggested the Lead Agency bring together a work group to discuss a more comprehensive outline. (b) Providers disenchanted with process of Fraud, Waste and Abuse Policies and Procedures. (c) Questioned the process for distributing clients throughout the system.
3. *Donna Castellano, CPNJ* ... Agreed with the issues presented by previous speakers, especially Ms. Murray’s.
4. *Leslie Breslau, SNJPC* (who covered the Hamilton off-site videoconferencing) ... Complimented Ms. Murray on her remarks.
5. *Anne Breakey, Archway*... Voiced support of Ms. Murray’s remarks.
6. *Carola d’Emery, Sunny Days* ... Made comments similar to Ms. Murray’s at the beginning of the meeting. Urged that, in conjunction with 2012 Early Intervention Week, Council support the REICs in a joint educational effort utilizing Webinar; the topic to be determined by a questionnaire to practitioners.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 12:20 p.m.

Upon motion by Denise Murray, seconded by Dr. Holahan and unanimously carried.

**APPROVED**

**1/27/12**